

- The audiences decode (ideologies and opinions, environment, mood, education) a meaning such as the emotional response.

Stuart Hall created 3 theories:

- 1) Preferred Reading: encoded and decoded are seen as the same, the institution wants to make an audience cry by encoding a meaning, and the audience then cries by decoding.
- 2) Negotiated Reading: there are similarities between the encoding and decoding, however, the audience will adapt to aspects to fit their needs.
- 3) Oppositional Reading: the encoding and the decoding oppose one another, a spectator may not be able to decode the encoded meaning the spectator develops their own response.

It's A Wonderful Life (Frank Capra, 1946)

The film is capable of generating a powerful emotional response due to 3 main factors being the performance of actors, the narrative of the film, and micro features.

Younger George working in the drug store sequence:

What's the emotional response? – Emotionally the sequence begins quite happy with young George serving the 2 girls but progressively begins to become depressing as we find out Mr Gower's son has died. Mr Gower has put poison into medicine capsules as he has been drinking and does not know what he is doing, and George attempts to resolve this. As an audience, we feel bad for both Mr Gower and George who is beaten by Mr Gower on his sore ear.

How's the emotional response generated? – This response is generated mainly through a performance by George and Mr Gower; George is very positive but quickly becomes sad whilst Mr Gower is consistently angry and depressed but very quickly turns sad. The difference in lighting between the main shop and the back room where Mr Gower is, it is darker at the back whilst lighter in the main shop. Lack of non-diegetic music makes the sequence more realistic and makes diegetic sounds stand out such as the slapping noise and characters dialogue.

Pottersville sequence:

What's the emotional response? – Emotionally the sequence is very depressing and quite shocking how Bedford Falls/Pottersville has changed without George being there, as an audience we feel George's confusion and stress and nothing is as it seems or how we expect it to be. As a spectator we are meant to dislike the new Pottersville, George consistently disliked Bedford Falls and always wanted to leave but Pottersville is conveyed as much worse through George's eyes. This results in us as the audience identifying the positives back from Bedford Falls, and also George realising what he had before.

How's the emotional response generated? – This response is generated through strong performance from the character of George, and the depressing nature of other characters not recognising him. The negativity of Pottersville is generated from lighting which is mostly neon lights; they have connotations of being slightly sleazy but also connote cities such as Las Vegas. Buildings in Bedford Falls have been converted into fighting rings, bars, strip clubs, casinos, nightclubs and a pawn shop. The absence of the older generation results in a less family orientated town, there are no children also and a very wide range of the 18-25-year-old generation. There is an absence of Christmas in the sequence meaning a harder style sequence compared to the loving/family style Christmassy sequences. The sequence involves much faster cutting as George walks down Pottersville Street; this makes the sequence more intense. Pottersville is very loud through diegetic sounds such as shouting people, cars, environment such as wind, music from the bars and clubs, and finally the police sirens which are heard almost instantly in the town.